

PERFECT

Spiritual Perfection



“A pupil is not superior to his teacher, but everyone [when he is] completely trained (readjusted, restored, set to rights, and perfected) will be like his teacher.”

Luke 6:40 (AMPC)

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INTRODUCTION

“The words of the Lord are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.” Psalm 12:6 (NASB)

God’s Word is refined seven times over! That is spectacular, and here is why. The meaning of the number seven just happens to be:

SPIRITUAL PERFECTION

Therefore, every Word of God must be perfectly purified before it could possibly be rendered as His Word. It is incredible how many times the word seven is used in God’s Word and especially concerning spiritual aspects. For instance, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and let us not forget the Holy Spirit itself is seven-fold!

In the natural realm rainbows are composed of the number seven, i.e., red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. In music we see the number seven clear as well as we sing, Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti...and then of course we begin again with Do (which is the eighth number and denotes new beginnings). Our last example is one we use all the time, our calendar. Yes, there are seven days to a week!

Time, nor space allows us to even begin a list in its entirety of the use of seven in God’s Word, however we encourage you to study this for yourself, and may your eyes be opened to see! May you too go on to spiritual perfection as you engage in this teaching, and may your eyes be enlightened, and your heart be receptive to further yourself in His Word and come up higher!

LET US GO ON TO PERFECTION

I believe this is a very important message. I’ve spent most of my life studying what the apostle Paul taught. I believe it’s the most important because he was the Church messenger that God raised up in his day to write these epistles and everything for us. I’m going to use the Amplified Bible for most of this.

*“Him we preach and proclaim, warning and admonishing everyone and instructing everyone” (How is that?) “in all wisdom” (What does wisdom mean?) “(comprehensive insight into the ways and purposes of God), that we may present every person **mature (full-grown, fully initiated, complete, and perfect)** in Christ (the Anointed One).”* The King James Version only says, *“that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus”* Colossians 1:28 (AMPC) That word **perfect** means **mature**. It means, brought to **maturity, Spiritual maturity**. That’s why the word says little children, grown men, fathers, there’s those stages of growth. Luke 6:40 (KJV) *“The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.”* It’s talking about **spiritual maturity**.

GOD WANTS ALL OF US TO RISE TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Basically, a lot of our religious systems are playpens for babies, people never grow out of babyhood. It blessed me one day down in Mesquite when a woman said, “I realize I’ve been sitting in a church that has kept me a baby.” That means she received a revelation that there really is a potential for growth. God’s Word says, *“... desire is the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby;”* 1 Peter 2:2 (KJV).

“Him we preach and proclaim, warning” (He is warning people) “and admonishing everyone and instructing everyone in all wisdom (comprehensive insight into the ways and purposes of God), that we may present every person mature (full-grown, fully initiated, complete, and perfect) in Christ (the Anointed One). For this I labor [unto weariness], striving with all the superhuman energy which He so mightily enkindles and works within me.” Colossians 1:28-29 (AMPC) Jeremiah 20 verse 9 says, Your Word is like a fire shut up in my bones. *“Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.” But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.”* Jeremiah 20:9 (NKJV)

The church began to fail back in Galatians. Galatians is explaining how to get us back to Romans. Sometimes you must study why things are not working, to receive revelation on how to make them work. Here in Galatians, He gives them the reproof. *“O you poor and silly and*

thoughtless and unreflecting and senseless Galatians! Who has fascinated or bewitched or cast a spell over you, unto whom—right before your very eyes—Jesus Christ (the Messiah) was openly and graphically set forth and portrayed as crucified? Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the [Holy] Spirit as the result of obeying the Law and doing its works, or was it by hearing [the message of the Gospel] and believing [it]? [Was it from observing a law of rituals or from a message of faith?] Are you so foolish” and this is why I came here, “and so senseless and so silly? Having begun [your new life spiritually] with the [Holy] Spirit, are you now reaching perfection [by dependence] on the flesh? Galatians 3:1-3 (AMPC)

They were trying to perfect the flesh. Do you see what happens in religion? They think because they wear a two-thousand-dollar suit, and they are full of all the don't do's that they have “got it”. They do it because religion is telling them not to; they don't do it because they have a love for God. There's a difference between the rules and regulations, and that's important, and it is scriptural for example, “*Do not handle [this], Do not taste [that], Do not even touch [them], Referring to things all of which perish with being used. To do this is to follow human precepts and doctrines.”* Colossians 2:21-22 (AMPC)

Let me take you down a highway here. I've thought about this and chewed and meditated on it. Now I would like to bring it to you in a way that you can get a hold of it. You know, I see the bumper stickers, all the time saying; “Christians aren't perfect only forgiven”. That's a demonic bumper sticker. I'm just going to be straight up with you, because we are all called to perfection. “*For even to this were you called [it is inseparable from your vocation]. For Christ also suffered for you, leaving you [His personal] example, so that you should follow in His footsteps.”* 1 Peter 2:21 (AMPC) That is powerful, isn't it?

I was taught as a child, that Jesus was just born in perfection. However, He wasn't born in perfection. I use these scriptures for years and people would get all upset about them. They need to get right with the Word of God, and not get upset with His Word. What does His Word say? “*For it was an act worthy [of God] and fitting [to the divine nature] that He, for Whose sake and by Whom all things have their existence, in*

bringing many sons into glory, should make the Pioneer of their salvation perfect [should bring to maturity the human experience necessary to be perfectly equipped for His office as High Priest] through” (How is that?) “through suffering. For both He Who sanctifies [making men holy] and those who are sanctified all have one [Father]. For this reason He is not ashamed to call them” (What?) “brethren;” (He’s going into the manifestation of the sons of God here.) “For He says, I will declare Your [the Father’s] name to My brethren; in the midst of the [worshiping] congregation I will sing hymns of praise to You. And again He says, My trust and assured reliance and confident hope shall be fixed in Him. And yet again, Here I am, I and the children whom God has given Me. Since, therefore, [these His] children share in flesh and blood [in the physical nature of human beings], He [Himself] in a similar manner partook of the same [nature], that by [going through] death He might bring to nought and make of no effect him who had the power of death—that is,” ... (Who?) “the devil”. Hebrews 2:10-14 (AMPC) This is powerful stuff!

JESUS LEARNED OBEDIENCE THROUGH WHAT HE SUFFERED

*“Although He was a Son,” (See, Jesus is our pattern to bring us into perfection.) “...**He learned [active, special] obedience through what He suffered.**” (What? He learned obedience through the things He suffered. Jesus wasn’t always obedient. In some things we suffer God is trying to teach us obedience.) “...And, [His completed experience] making Him **perfectly** [equipped], He became the Author and Source of eternal salvation to all those **who give heed and obey Him,**” (This word **perfectly**, means **totally mature**. Therefore, this means Jesus was brought to maturity. When we have knowledge as to why things are happening in our lives, those very things can drive us into spiritual maturity.) “*Being designated and recognized and saluted by God as High Priest after the order (with the rank) of Melchizedek.*” Concerning this we have much to say which is hard to explain, since you have become dull in your [spiritual] hearing and sluggish [even slothful in achieving spiritual insight].” (This is talking about why people aren’t coming into spiritual maturity.) “For even though by this time you ought to be teaching others, you actually need someone to teach you over again the very first principles of God’s Word. You have come to need milk, not solid food. For everyone who*

continues to feed on milk is obviously inexperienced and unskilled in the doctrine of righteousness (of conformity to the divine will in purpose, thought, and action), for he is a mere infant [not able to talk yet]! But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate and distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law. Therefore let us go on and get past the elementary stage in the teachings and doctrine of Christ (the Messiah), advancing steadily toward the **completeness and perfection that belong to spiritual maturity**. Let us not again be laying the foundation of repentance and abandonment of dead works (dead formalism) and of the faith [by which you turned] to God, With teachings about purifying, the laying on of hands, the resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgment and punishment. [These are all matters of which you should have been fully aware long, long ago.] If indeed God permits, we will [now] proceed [to advanced teaching]." Hebrew 5:8- 6:3 (AMPC)

This is Paul Smith's, (our old prophet's) favorite context right here. Now think about this; let's go on to perfection. It sounds like to me God's on the move. Jesus is our example. We are to follow in His footsteps. He's going someplace, right? Come on, I went to a church, where we heard the same fifty-two messages every year. Mother's Day sermon was different, but I always knew it was going to be Mother's Day. Honestly, what chance of growth or spiritual perfection was there for anyone to come to?

"But [that appointed time came] when Christ (the Messiah) appeared as a High Priest of the better things that have come and are to come. [Then] through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with [human] hands, that is, not a part of this material creation," Hebrews 9:11 (AMPC) You know you are the temple of the Holy Spirit, right?

WHOSE HOUSE, ARE WE?

"but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end." Hebrews 3:6 (NKJV) Most people don't even know Jesus as their High Priest. *"Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,*

consider the Apostle and High Priest of our (your) confession, Christ Jesus," Hebrews 3:1 (NKJV) When you get that, and consider that, and you fix your mind intently on that; your whole life will change.

"For since the Law has merely a rude outline (foreshadowing) of the good things to come—instead of fully expressing those things—it can never by offering the same sacrifices continually year after year make perfect those who approach [its altars]." Hebrews 10:1 (AMPC) Wow! The Old Testament couldn't make anybody perfect. All they could do was the sacrifice once a year. The high priest would go into the presence of God, then he would come out and tell the people what he heard. **But now; everyone can go there. The perfection comes in our fellowship with God! You draw nigh to God. He will draw nigh to you.**

Some people say things like, "I don't know where God is"? Well, He is right where they left Him. I tell people that all the time. They also say things like, "The devil keeps beating me in the head with a 4 x 4"! Well don't stand so close to him. We need to get a revelation of these things. He keeps himself and the wicked one touches him not! (1 John 5:18) I was raised in a denomination where they had the devil raised way up high, and he could do everything, but God couldn't do anything. Isn't that amazing? I thought, "man, who was standing up there preaching that all those years"? You guess for yourself.

Now think about this, the word **complete**, a lot of times, is used in place of **perfection**. This is what God is doing in us.

WHAT BRINGS US INTO PERFECTION?

We know spiritual perfection is available, but how can we get a hold of it? I want this with all my heart, and I have my whole life. What exactly is God here to do? He is here to, "*Strengthen (**complete, perfect**) and make you what you ought to be and equip you with everything good that you may carry out His will; [while He Himself] works in you and accomplishes that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ (the Messiah); to Whom be the glory forever and ever (to the ages of the ages). Amen (so be it).*" Hebrews 13:21 (AMPC) (Strengthen,

complete, perfect, that's what the amplified says, and to **make you what you ought to be.**)

Let's go to James chapter one and let me show you how this works. We know James is addressed to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. That's probably us. *"Consider it wholly joyful, my brethren, whenever you are enveloped in or encounter trials of any sort or fall into various temptations."* James 1:2-4 (AMPC) Think about that! What am I supposed to be? Wholly joyful! Awesome, Praise God!

I remember when I was a baby believer, I went to see this old Pentecostal lady. They said she was a prophet. She was up on this high platform. She had to be like almost 90 years old. She just blew my mind, she said; "I can't wait to get my hands on the devil." Then she said, "It was just a chance to prove I am more than a conqueror in every situation". She then ran and jumped off that platform and landed on the floor. I went, "Oh my God!" Then she went wild! **It is our chance to prove we are more than conquerors.** Isn't that right? I mean **we are more than a conqueror!** Praise God! Our attitude should be, bring it on! About different situations in our lives, we might say; "what's God doing this for?" He's trying to get rid of more of you, so there can be more of Him in your life. Right? All things are working together for good, for whom? For them that love God and are called according to His purpose. Right? *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* Romans 8:28 (KJV)

*"Be assured and understand that the trial and proving of your faith bring out endurance and steadfastness and patience. But let endurance and steadfastness and patience have full play and do a **thorough work**, so that you may be," (what?) "[people] **perfectly** and **fully developed** [with no defects], **lacking in nothing.**" James 1:3-4 (AMPC) Wow, **perfect, and complete!** Now, what is that bringing me into? **Spiritual maturity!***

"Oh God, why is this happening to me?" If you'd listen long enough, He will probably tell you. I'm telling you the truth. I've told different times when I've prayed that, and the Holy Spirit reveals to me why it's happening to me. Many times, it was because I was praying the

Word of God. The Holy Spirit would ask, “didn’t you ask me for this?” I answered, “well yeah.” He would then reply, “well, don’t you want it”? To which I would say again, “well yeah!” Finally, His answer would be, “well, you’ve got to go through all this, if you want to really get it.” We must grab ahold of this.

What is the book of James trying to tell us? He is trying to get us to **perfect our faith**. Think about Abraham, He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief. He was strong in faith giving the glory to God, right? He was **fully persuaded** that what God had promised He was also able to perform. (Romans 4:20-21) He is the father of our faith!

FULLY PERSUADED = FAITH IN TOTAL MATURITY

You’ve got to think about it, Abraham considered not his own body now dead when he was 100 years old. That wasn’t even a consideration! I’m sure the devil was standing over there rejoicing saying something like; “bless God, Abraham is the end of the seed! I won the battle, and it is over. That seed of Abraham, the seed of David, the seed of Christ is gone.” We really must receive an understanding of the Word of God. See, Abraham wouldn’t let go of his faith, because he was fully persuaded, of what God promised. Now, Sara laughed, right? That’s why Isaac was called laughter, because Isaac means laughter. God gave him that name, so she would be reminded, there is your laughter baby. God had to renew their youth. He had to, there’s no way around it. I’ve seen that in the Word of God as plain as day.

Now in James it reads, “*Are you willing to be shown [proof], you foolish (unproductive, spiritually deficient) fellow, that faith apart from [good] works is inactive and ineffective and worthless?*” (It doesn’t sound like he’s talking too nice to these guys right here, does it?) “*Was not our forefather Abraham [shown to be] justified (made acceptable to God) by [his] works when he brought to the altar as an offering his [own] son Isaac? You see that [his] faith was cooperating with his works, and [his] faith was completed and reached its supreme expression [when he implemented it] by [good] works. And [so] the Scripture was fulfilled that says, Abraham believed in (adhered to, trusted in, and relied on) God, and*

this was accounted to him as righteousness (as conformity to God’s will in thought and deed), and he was called God’s friend. You see that a man is justified (pronounced righteous before God) through what he does and not alone through faith [through works of obedience as well as by what he believes].” James 2:20-24 (AMPC)

Now you realize his name previously was Abram. God changed his name to Abraham, indicating he was the father of a multitude. Everywhere he went people would declare he was the father of a multitude. He might have thought something like, “well I’m sterile I can’t have babies”. Did he say that? No, he didn’t. He kept hearing that he was the father of multitudes, and he kept confessing it.

Now we continue in James. *“So also with Rahab the harlot—was she not shown to be justified (pronounced righteous before God) by [good] deeds when she took in the scouts (spies) and sent them away by a different route? For as the human body apart from the spirit is lifeless, so faith apart from [its] works of obedience is also” (What?) “dead.” James 2:25-26 (AMPC)*

I found this characteristic of people being “doers of the Word of God”, every time I would read scriptures, and it would have something for me to do as well. Then I would apply that to my life, and it always worked. We are called to be doers of the Word of God, right? Jesus is our example. Why would you suffer the way Jesus suffered? It is because you begin to do what the Word of God says for you to do.

“Not many [of you] should become teachers (self-constituted censors and re-provers of others), my brethren, for you know that we [teachers] will be judged by a higher standard and with greater severity [than other people; thus we assume the greater accountability and the more condemnation]. For we all often stumble and fall and offend in many things. And if anyone does not offend in speech [never says the wrong things], he is a fully developed character and a perfect man, able to control his whole body and to curb his entire nature.” James 3:1-2 (AMPC) Wow! For further revelation I encourage you to study the whole chapter of James 3 for it teaches how our words (if they are not used

with wisdom) do not only snare ourselves, but others also. *“With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who were made in God’s likeness!”* James 3:9 (AMPC)

GOD BRINGS US INTO PERFECTED FAITH, AND GOD WANTS PERFECTED LOVE IN EACH OF US.

We must realize, **God is love**. We know that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Some people say things like, “well, I don’t have that kind of faith”. What is the answer to that? Listen to the Word of God more. You know, it’s pretty simple, it’s not that hard. We are coming into a different time and a different hour.

“Anyone who confesses (acknowledges, owns) that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides (lives, makes His home) in him and he [abides, lives, makes his home] in God.” (That’s a pretty good place, huh?) *“And we know (understand, recognize, are conscious of, by observation and by experience) and believe (adhere to and put faith in and rely on)”* (What are we relying on?) *“the love God cherishes for us. God is love, and he who dwells and continues in love dwells and continues in God, and God dwells and continues”* (Where?) *“in him.”* 1 John 4:15-16 (AMPC)

AS HE IS SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD!

You see, people don’t have a revelation of this. I’m talking about coming into **spiritual maturity**, and very few make it. Christianity is full of babies, from one end to the other, and I will leave that alone. Now, let’s continue in 1 John. *“In this [union and communion with Him] love is brought to completion and attains”* (What?) **“perfection” (spiritual maturity!** I’m mature in this love.) **“perfection with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgment [with assurance and boldness to face Him], because as He is, so are we in this world.”** 1 John 4:17 (AMPC) That is so powerful, isn’t it? Jesus is our example, and we are following in His footsteps.

“There is no fear in love [dread does not exist], but full-grown (complete, perfect) love...,” (You see, this is mature love.) *“... turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! For fear brings with it the*

thought of punishment, and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection]. We love Him, because He first loved us. If anyone says, I love God, and hates (detests, abominates) his brother" (I see this all the time and I turn from these people, for we are to speak evil of no man.) "[in Christ], he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, Whom he has not seen. And this command (charge, order, injunction) we have from Him: that he who loves God shall," (What?) "love his brother [believer] also." 1 John 4:18-21 (AMPC)

I'm talking about bringing you into this **spiritual maturity!** My mission with this teaching is, "...that we may present every person **mature (full-grown, fully initiated, complete, and perfect)** in Christ (the Anointed One)." Colossians 1:28 (AMPC) Therefore, we have these formulas coming up in Matthew 5.

We begin to see that these are our examples. Our faith is being tried. Why? It is because we need to come to that mega- patience, and that persistence to stand, on the Word of God. I've seen everything that God has promised me to come to pass, when I stood on the Word of God. And He has more things for me that I know are going to happen. I know they are going to happen with all my heart. I am fully persuaded!

"You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy; But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, To show that you are the children of your Father Who is in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the wicked and on the good, and makes the rain fall upon the upright and the wrongdoers [alike]. For if you love those who love you," (phileo love) "what reward can you have? Do not even the tax collectors do that? And if you greet only your brethren, what more than others are you doing? Do not even the Gentiles (the heathen) do that? You, therefore, must be **perfect [growing into complete maturity]**" (That's what I'm talking about, **spiritual perfection; maturity. Growing into complete maturity.**) "of godliness in mind and character, having reached the proper height of virtue and integrity)," (Where is the integrity today?) "as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:43-48 (AMPC)

BE PERFECT, EVEN AS YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER IS PERFECT.

Here is an example of real love being brought to maturity. “He said to Him, What sort of commandments? [Or, which ones?] And Jesus answered, You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as [you do] yourself. The young man said, I have observed all these from my youth; what still do I lack? Jesus answered him, If you would be **perfect**” (Spiritually mature, right?) “[that is, have that **spiritual maturity** which accompanies self-sacrificing character], go and sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; and come, be My disciple [side with My party and follow Me].” Matthew 19:18-21 (AMPC) That’s powerful, isn’t it? Self-sacrificing service. “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for” (For what?) “his friends” John 15:13 (NKJV) People can find so many reasons not to do this. They use excuses such as, “oh, this is what this person did to me”. However, that has nothing to do with love and it is spiritual immaturity to the max! People that go there, find themselves stuck in that...constantly.

WE CAN AND SHOULD INTERCEDE, HOWEVER; WE CANNOT FIGHT PEOPLES BATTLES FOR THEM.

“Epaphras, who is one of yourselves, a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. [He is] always striving for you” (Now listen to this,) “earnestly in his prayers,” (What is he praying?) “[pleading] that you may [as persons of ripe character and clear conviction] stand firm and **mature [in spiritual growth]**, convinced and fully assured in everything willed by God.” Colossians 4:12 (AMPC) This guy was an intercessor for the church, and he is praying for spiritual maturity to come into people’s lives. The Holy Spirit told me, that I can’t fight peoples battles for them. I can, however, stand in the gap and take up the hedge. I can allow God to move, and move on people’s conscience and their spirit man, and for the Holy Spirit to begin to put an unction on them. But I cannot fight their battles for them.

Paul declared, *“I press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward.”* Philippians 3:14 (AMPC) Come up higher, right? *“Come up hither...”* Revelation 4:1 (KJV) Ok, now back over to Philippians 3. *“So let those [of us] who are **spiritually mature** and **full-grown** have this mind and hold these convictions; and if in any respect you have a different attitude of mind, God will make that clear to you also.”* Philippians 3:15 (AMPC) Wow! That is powerful, isn't it? What is Paul doing? He is pressing toward a mark. Why would he do that? In order that God would change his vile body, so that it would be fashioned like unto His glorious body. *“who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”* Philippians 3:21 (NKJV) It is better if you read the whole context.

TRUE FIVE-FOLD MINISTRIES ARE FOR THE PERFECTING, AND EQUIPPING OF THE SAINTS

In Ephesians 4 we know Paul is talking about the five-fold ministry which consists of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, right? For what? The perfecting of the saints, and the work of the ministry. *“And His gifts were [varied; He Himself appointed and gave men to us] some to be apostles (special messengers), some prophets (inspired preachers and expounders), some evangelists (preachers of the Gospel, traveling missionaries), some pastors (shepherds of His flock) and teachers. His intention was”* (What was His intention?) *“the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people)”* (To bring them to maturity!) *“[that they should do]”* (They should do what?) *“the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church),”* Ephesians 4:11-12 (AMPC)

Today, people are trying to destroy the church. I call it reverse evangelism. It's bad everywhere because it's the same religious devil, he is just going by a different name. Think about it. If you don't know the Word of God, how are you going to have discernment on things? Just take Azusa Street for example. It was all stopped by the gainsayers. People came from all over the world at one time. The power of God was

still there, and nothing had changed. However, the gainsayers would say things like, “oh, they are trying to get black folks and white folks to go to church together”, etc. I have read all that stuff that the critics said. They were the very people that destroyed it, for it could have kept on going forever. The spirits working in the people stopped it. I must believe they are the very ones selling all the books about Azusa Street. Now they are making money on it.

This is powerful! Let’s read that passage in Ephesians again. “*His intention was the **perfecting** and the **full equipping** of the saints*” (This is God’s people!) “*(His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ’s body (the church)*” (Why?) “*[That it might develop] until we all attain oneness in the faith*” (**Oneness in the faith!**) “*and in the comprehension of the [full and accurate] knowledge of the Son of God, that [we might arrive] at really mature manhood (the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height **of Christ’s own perfection**),*” Ephesians 4:12-13 (AMPC)

People used to laugh at me in my old church. They would say things like, “oh brother Charles wants to be like Jesus.” I would tell them, “only because the Bible says so.” “*...as He is, so are we in this world.*” 1 John 4:17 (AMPC)

Right here, in Ephesians 4:13 (AMPC) it says; the height of Christ’s own perfection “*...is nothing less than the standard height of Christ’s own perfection) the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ and the completeness found in Him.*”

STANDING IN DEFENSE OF THE TRUTH COMES AT A PRICE.

How are you ever going to have the glory of God, if you’re not going to suffer as Jesus suffered? It says, “*And a man’s foes will be they of his own household.*” Matthew 10:36 (AMPC) Those of your own household will be your biggest enemies, right? Jesus said, “*...Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with*

persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.” Mark 10:29-30 (NKJV)

If you’re standing in defense of the Word of God, you are going to *“...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”* Ephesians 5:11 (NKJV) I will not mingle. I don’t want anything that’s going to get me away from what God has for me.

“So then, we may no longer be children, tossed [like ships] to and fro between chance gusts of teaching and wavering with every changing wind of doctrine, [the prey of] the cunning and cleverness of unscrupulous men, [gamblers engaged] in every shifting form of trickery in inventing errors to mislead.” Ephesians 4:14 (AMPC) Isn’t that something? I’ve said this before but let me say it again right here. I decided years ago that if Jesus showed up, I wouldn’t want to be one of His gainsayers. No way!

When things were rowdy almost 30 years ago, I told my friends, I’m going to take you to see a real prophet of God. Because we had already experienced the chocolate-covered cherries ones that would hand out the bouquet of roses. You know the kinds of prophets that prophesy things like, “you’re going to preach to all the kings and queens of the earth, all that glorious stuff”. Anyways, I took them over to see this prophet, and this guy said; “there are five preachers in here tonight.” There were in fact five ministers in there that night. I wasn’t a minister at that time. This prophet called them out of the crowd and every one of them he wrung out like a dirty old dish rag. He said, “You’ve never done it God’s way! You’ve always done it your way!” You know, those kinds of prophecies. The ones that people do not want to hear. The prophets that speak the truth, like John the Baptist. Whoa! Later I also went to see this true prophet, and he also revealed the secrets of my heart, and brought me into a greater maturity as well. I bawled and cried too; I’ll be honest with you. Most people don’t want that.

IMPORTANCE OF HAVING SPIRITUAL MENTORS

*“For though you might have ten thousand **instructors in Christ**, yet you do not have many fathers;”* 1 Corinthians 4:15 (NKJV) People don’t want real fathers; rather spiritual mentors. After working with my

mentors in construction for years, I took them to my first job. They told me, “Don’t do this job.” I asked them, “why?” They said, “let us tell you why.” Then they pointed out everything wrong with that job. It was a big commercial job, and I was thinking I would be making like fifty-thousand dollars or more. Well guess what? That job was everything my mentors said it was going to be. They had that maturity, understanding, and insight that I was lacking. You see, there are many people who don’t have any spiritual mentors at all. I’ll leave that alone, but just know it is important that we have spiritual mentors in our lives. Spiritual mentors that know God’s Word and are led by the Holy Spirit.

Now, back to Ephesians. *“Rather, let our lives lovingly express truth [in all things, speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly]. Enfolded in love, let us grow up in every way and in all things into Him Who is the Head, [even] Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).”* (Wow! Most people don’t want to do this.) *“For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts), closely joined and firmly knit together by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part [with power adapted to its need] is working properly [in all its functions], grows to full maturity, building itself up in”* (In what?) *“love.”* Ephesians 4:15-16 (AMPC)

You see the way God’s Word has this set up, you not only come to full maturity but now you also desire to be joined with other people who are of maturity. Or at least you want to be joined with other people who want to mature spiritually, right?

When this thing comes to its fullness, and it will in our lifetime, it’s going to rattle and shake the whole world. The sad thing is, there are not a whole lot of Christians who want to come into full maturity.

WHY IS UNITY SO IMPORTANT?

The number one means unity! *“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!”* Deuteronomy 6:4 (NKJV)

You have probably heard me talk about reconciliation. God took a little piece of Himself, and another piece of Himself (points to people)

and we are all reconciled unto God. You know in Ezekiel 37, the bones? Prophecy to those bones' son of man! Then what happened? They all went back together! "And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord God, You know." Again He said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord." So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone." Ezekiel 37:3-7 (NKJV) I genuinely believe that's what God is doing today.

GOD IS MAKING IN HIMSELF ONE NEW MAN, SO MAKING PEACE.

The devil is afraid of that, he truly fears it. Come on, he fears it! When my mentors the Greeks wanted to mentor me, they said, "you'll have to do everything you can to stay with us. Every devil in hell will try to separate us." The same thing happened when Charles Shockley became my spiritual father over 30 years ago. He said, "demonic forces will try and separate us, and I will not come looking for you." Well, we are still together today. Yes, he's yelled at me and said things I didn't care for, and so did the Greeks.

*"Yet when we are among the **full-grown (spiritually mature Christians, who are ripe in understanding)**, we do impart a **[higher] wisdom (the knowledge of the divine plan previously hidden)**; but it is indeed not a wisdom of this present age or of this world nor of the leaders and rulers of this age, who are being brought to nothing and are doomed to pass away." (The full-grown mature believers who are ripe in understanding. In my life these are always the ones I sought out and went after. Now listen to what Paul says. "But rather what we are setting forth is **a wisdom of God once hidden [from the human understanding] and now revealed to us by God— [that wisdom] which God devised and decreed before the ages for our glorification**" (What is it supposed to do?) "[to lift us into the glory of His presence]." (To lift us*

into the glory of His presence! That's wisdom!) 1 Corinthians 2:6-7
(AMPC)

WHY WOULD WE OPPOSE THE VERY THING THAT JESUS DIED FOR...THE CHURCH?

My fellowship with Christ costed me my membership. We need to understand how sacred the church is. Most people don't understand that Jesus died for the church. People say, "He died for my sins" ...well, yeah, but when you get a revelation that He died for the church, why would you want to oppose the very thing He died for?

HE IS GOING TO HAVE AN ASSEMBLY OF PEOPLE, AND THE GATES OF HELL WILL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST THEM!

That assembly is rising in the earth today. Yes, it is rising today, and those people come to maturity, and recognize maturity. Do you know what I'm talking about? Not everyone is going to make it. Why is denominationalism the way it is? Let me just dabble a little bit. Denominationalism is pre-arranged to keep everybody babies because; if you grow up, you're going to figure it out. I used to tell people years ago if you want to find out if you're in a religious church or not, start reading the Bible. You'll figure it out pretty quick. You know they don't want you reading the Bible, because then you will begin to mature, and begin to start seeking the sincere milk of the Word of God, that you should grow there by! We must get a revelation of this and understand that spiritual maturity is important.

PERFECTION IS SPIRITUAL MATURITY

"A pupil is not superior to his teacher, but everyone [when he is] completely trained (readjusted, restored, set to rights, and perfected) will be like his teacher. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye but do not notice or consider the beam [of timber] that is in your own eye?" Luke 6:40-41 (AMPC)

Let each consider others better than themselves. I'm talking about the mind of Christ here. You can't do that with the carnal mind. You can't do that as an immature believer, because immaturity is all about I-I-I, and me-me-me, and I did-I did, and I can-I can. You know what I mean. It should be, let each consider the other better than ourselves. The renewed mind is a huge part of maturity, having the mind of Christ. Being concerned about somebody else's welfare more than your own. For instance, "...pray for those who spitefully use you." Luke 6:28 (NKJV) We've got to understand this and figure these things out. If we don't, we are not going to come into perfection.

*"Or how can you say to your brother, Brother, allow me to take out the speck that is in your eye, when you yourself do not see the beam that is in your own eye? You actor (pretender, hypocrite)! First take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. For there is no good (healthy) tree that bears decayed (worthless, stale) fruit, nor on the other hand does a decayed (worthless, sickly) tree bear good fruit. For each tree is known and identified by its own fruit; for figs are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor is a cluster of grapes picked from a bramble bush. The upright (honorable, intrinsically good) man, out of the good treasure [stored] in his heart produces what is upright (honorable and intrinsically good), and the evil man out of the evil storehouse brings forth that which is depraved (wicked and intrinsically evil); **for out of the abundance (overflow) of the heart his mouth speaks.** Why do you call Me, Lord, Lord, and do not [practice] what I tell you? For everyone who comes to Me and listens to My words [in order to heed their teaching] and **does** them, I will show you what he is like:"* (That's pretty powerful isn't it? Jesus was our prime example, and not only are we joint-heirs with Him, but we are everything that He is. He is the pattern Son for every one of us.) *"He is like a man building a house, who dug and went down deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood arose, the torrent broke against that house and could not shake or move it, because it had been securely built or founded on a rock. But he who merely hears and does not practice doing My words is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation, against which the torrent burst, and immediately it*

collapsed and fell, and the breaking and ruin of that house was great.”
Luke 6:42-49 (AMPC)

BEING A DOER OF THE WORD TAKES PRACTICE

We must practice being a doer of God’s Word. The storm came to both people, but the guy who built upon the rock, what happened to him? Remember, upon this solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand? *“So everyone who **hears these words of Mine and acts upon them [obeying them]** will be like a sensible (prudent, practical, wise) man who built his house upon the rock. And the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And **everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them** will be like a stupid (foolish) man who built his house upon the sand. And the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great and complete was the fall of it.”* Matthew 7:24-27 (AMPC) **If we don’t know what God’s Word says, how can we do what it says? Everything that controls Jesus controls us, if we are in Christ.**

WHAT IS GOING TO BRING US INTO SPIRITUAL MATURITY?

Being a doer of the Word of God brings us into spiritual maturity. What is the other thing that’s going to bring us into spiritual maturity? It’s when we decide to believe the Word of God over what man is teaching. I tell people all the time, “don’t take my word, on anything I ever teach or say, don’t take my word on it.” It’s not going to do you any good unless you apply it to yourself, and you go and make sure that’s what the Word of God says.

“But rather, you have come to Mount Zion, even to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to countless multitudes of angels in festal gathering,” (Who is this written to?) *“And to the church (assembly) of the Firstborn who are registered [as citizens] in heaven,”* (Now that’s the group we need to hang with.) *“and to the God Who is Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous (the redeemed in heaven) who have been made”* (What?) *“perfect,”* Hebrews 12:22-23 (AMPC)In

the NKJV in verse 23 it reads, “...to the spirits of **just men made perfect**” Who’s in that Jerusalem? This doesn’t mean just male; it means women too. I want to make that clear. God created man in His image, male and female; man means both. Of just men **made perfect**. It is the people that come to **spiritual maturity** that are in that Jerusalem. However, it is not everybody.

I did a teaching years ago called, “The Five Levels of Grace” and then God showed me the five dimensions of darkness: of hell. There are five different levels on the other side. Pretty crazy, huh? It works both ways. Those things are what made me strive to what I’m talking about today. Since we are in this Jerusalem thing...let’s go on to perfection!

THIS IS THE MARRIAGE!

*“Because God had us in mind and had something better and greater in view for us,” (That’s pretty good, isn’t it?) “so that they [these heroes and heroines” (That’s the girls too.) “of faith] should not come to” (What?) “perfection **apart from us [before we could join them].**” Hebrews 11:40 (AMPC)*

Now this is back to the same thing again. These people from Hebrews eleven are in the heavenly Jerusalem, for they looked for a city whose builder and maker is God! God has prepared for them the city they were looking and believing for! Now we must think about this. They moved into the heavenly Jerusalem. The King James version says, “...they without us should not be made perfect”. **That’s the marriage!** He is bringing all things together in heaven and earth, the people who are in **spiritual maturity**. The heavenly Jerusalem is men and women, right? *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28 (KJV) It’s going to be the people who are striving for what God wants. “Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit...” Ephesians 4:3 (KJV) “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit...” (for who?) “...all saints”. Ephesians 6:18 (KJV) Our inheritance is where? Among the saints! It’s among the saints! WOW!*

Everything God told me to do, included trials and testing. Making excuses is not going to work with God, for there are no excuses. There are none. You are either going to try to build what God is building, or you are not going to be a part of it. This is simple. **We are lively stones fitly framed together growing up into the temple of the Lord.** (1 Peter 2:5) Think about it. Spiritual maturity loves what God loves and hates what God hates.

WE LOVE WHAT GOD LOVES, AND HATE WHAT HE HATES

“These six things the Lord hates, indeed, seven are an abomination to Him:” (God hates this!) A proud look [the spirit that makes one overestimate himself and underestimate others], a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that manufactures wicked thoughts and plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who breathes out lies [even under oath], and he who sows discord among his brethren.” Proverbs 6:16-19 (AMPC)

That’s radical. Why? Because God is building unity, He is for unity. He is not about bringing discord. The thing is, we’ve got to strive for maturity! Who God loves; He chastises. That goes back to when Jesus learned obedience by the things, He what? Suffered! Sometimes we must check and see, why an individual situation is happening? People don’t have a revelation of the mystery; therefore, they’re not striving to accomplish the mystery. I believe the only way the church can move into this third dimension, this other third level in God, into total spiritual maturity, is to have meat. I have just presented lots of scriptures that back that up. Why do people hang out where the milkman hangs out every day? To get milk. There’s no growth in it. It tastes good, and it works. You can even make ice cream out of it; but there is no growth in it. That is what is going on in the body of Christ today. I believe with all my heart that God is totally fed up with all this stuff. **He wants spiritual maturity!** I know He does, and I’m blessed to see all this coming into maturity.

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*“Finally, brethren, pray for us,
that the Word of the Lord
may have free course,
and be glorified, even as it is with you.”*

2 Thessalonians 3:1

“So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed”

Acts 19:20

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